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Baseball

Non-wood bats must conform in 2003

Effective January 1, 2003, all non-wood bats must meet the Ball Exit Speed Ratio (BESR) performance standard (1-3-5). Bats will be required to have a BESR mark, which ensures a maximum exit speed of 97 miles per hour and that the bat has met the moment-of-inertia requirement.

Rules changed for 2001 regarding legal bats are still in place for 2002. The maximum diameter of the barrel may be two and five-eighths inches and the bat must have a minus differential between the length and weight of the bat (a 33-inch-long bat, for example, cannot weigh less than 30 ounces).

"Adding the BESR requirement for bats used in high school baseball is a continuation of changes made for the 2001 season to ensure that bat performance mirrors the performance of wood bats," said Elliot Hopkins, NFHS baseball rules editor. "The main goals with all the recent changes in bat requirements have been to minimize the risk of injury to high school student-athletes and maintain the balance between offense and defense and keep within the sound traditions of the game."

NFHS/Referee Baseball Guide 2002 11